

31st Fighter Wing: The U.S. Air Force's fighter wing south of the Alps

THE VIGILEER

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Aviano Air Base, Italy

Fly Bys

Commander's call

A 31st Fighter Wing commander's call is at 7:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. today in Hangar One. Attendance is mandatory for all wing members and civilians are welcome to attend.

Gate hours

The **Area One**, **Area Two** and main **Area F gates** are open 24 hours a day seven days a week. The **Area F Roveredo gate** is open from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Mondays through Fridays, excluding holidays and down days. The inbound **contracting gate** is open to all vehicles from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays and the outbound gate is open from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays. **Gate six**, the former 16th Air Force gate, is open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays through Fridays excluding holidays and down days.

Awards banquet

The 31st Fighter Wing's annual awards banquet is at 6 p.m. March 3 in the La Bella Vista Club. The cost is \$16.50 for club members and \$18.50 for non-club members. For more information, call Senior Master Sgt. Michael Land at Ext. 8295.

By Senior Airman Sarah Gregory
31st Fighter Wing
Public Affairs

As the Aviano 2000 program works to improve and expand base facilities, community members can expect to see continued road closures and detours.

"There is a lot of utility construction work planned for Area F this year as we start the flightline communications and electrical projects," said Lt. Col. Ken Polasek, Aviano 2000 project manager. "These projects will provide a completely new service and capability to each of these utilities. Over the two-year duration of each, the Aviano community will see small road closures, detours and other impacts to individual facilities."

Designed to support the bed-down of two F-16 squadrons, Aviano 2000 was supported by NATO efforts. Including the NATO contributions of \$395 million to the Air Force and \$12 million to the Italian air force, the program total



Photo by Senior Airman Sarah Gregory

An Italian contractor works on the new security forces building behind the La Dolce Vita dining facility in Area F. Once completed, Aviano 2000 projects will provide new capabilities to various squadrons. People can expect road closures and detours as Aviano continues to improve.

is \$610 million.

"The total Aviano 2000 program includes 174 U.S. projects at an estimated \$138 million," said Colonel Polasek. "These projects were done in the early years of the program and have included the dorms, temporary lodging facilities, movie theater, post of-

fice and other quality of life projects."

The Aviano 2000 program has steadily been making progress, which can be seen in all the new buildings and facilities opening. In 2005 alone, 19 projects were completed including the integrated communication center, the youth

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TMO closed: The Traffic Management Office is closed from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. today for an official function. For more information, call Ext. 5931.

31st FW Sortie Board

sortie: n, a flight of a combat aircraft on a mission

	Hours	Sorties
31st FW goal	905.8	632
	- 148.0	- 72

Information current as of Thursday.



Inspirational

Retired Lt. Col. Lee "Buddy" Archer, speaks to Aviano Airmen about his days as a Tuskegee Airman fighter pilot.

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Festivities

There's still time to partake in the colorful festivities during Venice Carnevale. Events run through Tuesday.

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Letter to Airmen: Air Force Core Values

I continue to be honored to serve with you as Secretary of this great Air Force. Whether on the ground, in air or space, or on the new frontier of cyberspace – and whether you wear uniforms or civilian clothes – you respond to daily challenges that embody our core values of Integrity First, Service Before Self and Excellence in All We Do.

These core values should reflect the values we share from the moment we take our oath to support and defend the constitution. We must continue to reflect on these values, linked to that oath. Sharing my thoughts in this note is part of that ongoing process.

Integrity First reminds us we must “walk the talk” – our words and actions must be integrated in our lives. It reminds us of Thomas Jefferson’s concept of moral muscles – that we build and strengthen our character through the daily exercise of words, actions and decisions. Integrity first means not only physical courage, but moral courage as well, so that we sometimes stand up by speaking up. It means being loyal to our friends, to each other – by being loyal to our oath, our Air Force, and our Nation.

Service Before Self is not the same as “service,” a value also claimed by some civilian institutions and corporations. Our Service requires sacrifice and commitment to our Nation. We understand we make decisions in an environment where freedoms are on the line, and lives are at stake. Service Before

Self begins with duty, but it means more. It means that, in our Air Force, as we fly and fight in war and peace, going above-and-beyond-the-call-of-duty is not the exception – it is the rule.

Excellence in All We Do reminds us, at the most basic level, of the old “Hometown Newspaper Test” – imagining our parents reading about our actions, and wanting them to be proud. But it also includes the military concept of honor – knowing our actions reflect on all Airmen – and on the Air Force itself. It reminds us that we stand on the shoulders of giants: heroes like Billy Mitchell, and Doolittle, Spaatz, and Rickenbacker; heroes who faced and beat incredible odds. We have inherited a history of excellence, courage and greatness. We must live up to that heritage, become part of it, and pass it on.

All Airmen are men and women of character. Our enduring Air Force Core Values provide a touchstone as we rise to meet current and future challenges, threats, and opportunities. As America’s Airmen, it is imperative that we maintain the moral high ground – our nation depends on it. I thank all of you for your contributions and sacrifices. I salute you!



Michael W. Wynne
Secretary of the Air Force



Photo by Airman Nathan J. Doza

Let's make a deal

Lt. Col. Darrell Raynor, 31st Mission Support Squadron commander, announces Heather Heath's prize during a 'Let's Make a Deal' theme Spouse It Up event at the base theater Tuesday. The next Spouse It Up event is 10:30 a.m., March 15 in Area D.

Words of wisdom

Tuskegee Airman speaks to Aviano Airmen

By Master Sgt. Carole Steele
31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

African American pioneer, WWII fighter pilot, successful venture capitalist – Retired Lt. Col. Lee “Buddy” Archer, Jr., has packed a lot into his 85 years.

As an official Air Force speaker, he traveled to Aviano last week to attend several African American History Month events.

He was the guest of honor at a breakfast Friday in the La Bella Vista Club, where he spoke to a full house about his 29 plus years in the military, the struggles of the Tuskegee Airmen, his highly successful civilian career and passed on words of advice to today’s Airmen.

His story begins as a young man growing up in Harlem where he was rarely subjected to segregation. After high school, he attended New York University up until his sophomore year when he enlisted to serve his country in 1941, before WWII began.

A fan of WWI aviation, his goal was to become a pilot. “I became ridiculously active about it, but I didn’t know in the beginning that there was a law restricting African Americans being in the Army Air Corps,” said Colonel Archer.

This he discovered after enlisting. He was made an Army private in the infantry and went to boot camp at Camp Upton on Long Island, N.Y. “All of us, black and white, trained together,” he said. “Then they sent us to different bases and 200-300 of us were sent to Camp Wheeler in Macon, Ga.

“We all got on the train together, we laughed, we joked, we traveled together until we reached Washington, D.C., the capital of the country,” he said.

That’s when many of them got the surprise of their life. The group was taken off the train, separated by race and segregated in different cars. “It was the first shock I ever had like that and, incidentally, it was for a lot of other people on that train. A white fellow I was with was more shocked than I was. He was about to get in trouble saying ‘Why should this happen?’ But that was it.”

By the time the group reached Macon, Ga., they found themselves in the center of segregation that



Photo by Airman Liliana Moreno

Retired Lt. Col. Lee “Buddy” Archer speaks to Aviano’s Airmen during the African American History Month breakfast at the La Bella Vista Club Friday. Colonel Archer spoke about his struggles as a Tuskegee Airman and his successful civilian career.

reached even to the base. “It was a horrendous period. And if that didn’t change us, it was proof that nothing would. We still went and tried to do the best job we could,” said Colonel Archer.

During that time, the president ordered the Army Air Corps to conduct an ‘experiment’ to see if African American men could be trained as pilots. That was the birth of the Tuskegee Airmen, of which Colonel Archer was one of the first of more than 1,000 African Americans who would earn their wings during the 1940s.

Forecast to be a failure, the Tuskegee Airmen were extremely successful.

Then came the second hurdle. “After they trained us, they didn’t want to send us to combat,” said the colonel. “We persisted until they finally sent us and we were deeply successful. Our record stands with anyone else in the military.”

During WWII, the Tuskegee Airmen garnered countless decorations, including 150 distinguished flying crosses and 744 Air Medals and carried the distinction of being the only unit to not lose a single bomber to enemy fire under its escort.

After the war, the Tuskegee Airmen returned home to a still-segregated America. Then on July 28, 1948, the president signed Executive Order 9981 that integrated the military.

“I am proud to say that the Air Force [integrated] immediately,” said the colonel. “The other services took some time, some up to three years. But the Air Force was the leader in giving equal opportunity and equal treatment to people of other ethnic or racial backgrounds.”

Something else Colonel Archer returned to was Ina, a girl he had met in Macon. Her father had denied his request to marry her until he returned from the war, not wanting his daughter to become a widow at 17. The aircraft that Colonel Archer flew during the war, which is still flying today, was named ‘Ina the Macon Belle.’

He and his belle were married for 54 years “before she did the unforgivable,” said Colonel Archer, “She died before me. But we had four wonderful kids and five grandchildren. If anybody judges me and my life in the future, I hope they judge me for the kind of kids I raised, cause I’ll make out like a bandit,” said the proud patriarch.

He’s also proud of his civilian career. After flying more than 3,500 hours in four different aircraft, and a rise from Army private to Air Force lieutenant colonel, he retired and moved just as strongly and swiftly through the civilian sector.

Starting at General Foods, which also sent him back to school at UCLA, he worked his way up to the pinnacle of the financial world. “I have had a really remarkable career,” said Colonel Archer. “I bought companies for the company and, as a sideline, I helped 74 African American companies start businesses.”

After being CEO of several very successful businesses, he ended up running one of the largest venture capital companies in the country.

His advice to those now serving?

See Tuskegee, Page 7

Feeling sick?

31st MDG explains cold, flu differences

Courtesy 31st Medical Group

With the changes in weather, people may find themselves experiencing symptoms of the common cold or flu.

There are differences between the cold and flu, and not every symptom needs to be treated by a doctor.

The cold and flu are both respiratory illnesses but are caused by different viruses. The flu is usually worse than the common cold, and the symptoms are more intense. Symptoms include body aches, extreme tiredness, fever and dry cough.

Cold symptoms are usually milder than the flu. People are more likely to experience a runny or stuffy nose. Colds generally do not result in serious health problems, such as Pneumonia, bacterial infections or hospitalization.

If someone has a cold, they don't need to make an appointment at the clinic. There is no cure for the common cold and the doctor can't make

the virus go away. Since it's a virus, antibiotics don't help either. Instead, they may hurt the patients.

Since doctors can't fix the problem, patients can only treat the symptoms. For fevers and aches, it's best to take a pain reliever. Antihistamine and nasal spray or chicken noodle soup can treat nasal congestion. Cough suppressants can help with nighttime coughing.

When ill, it's important to get lots of rest and drink plenty of fluids.

For most healthy adults, there are rarely complications from the cold or flu. Sometimes patients may need to be evaluated by a doctor if they experience difficulty breathing, shortness of breath or chest pain, persistent fever lasting more than 72 hours, vomiting or inability to keep fluids down, extremely painful swallowing, persistent coughing, persistent congestion and headaches.

For more information on treating cold and flu symptoms, call the Nurse Advice Line at 800-877-660.

Deployed spouses briefing

The deployed spouses briefing is a bi-monthly briefing held during deployments. The briefing provides information to spouses of deployed members. The next briefing is at 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. March 6 in the community center.

The briefing opens with comments from Brig. Gen. Robert Yates, 31st Fighter Wing commander, and speakers include members from the following agencies: legal, family advocacy, chapel, Tricare, Red Cross, finance, public affairs, passenger terminal, Department of Defense Dependent Schools and the services squadron.

Free childcare is provided by the Combat Care Parent Co-op and is on a first-come, first-served basis. For childcare reservations, call Stacey Bloyd at 0434-30-5630 or 347-837-3470 at least 24 hours prior.

For more information on the briefing, call the Family Support Center at Ext. 5663.

Lost: The 31st Security Forces Squadron Investigations Section handles lost and found property. For more information, call Ext. 5401.

Construction, from page 1

activities center and kindergarten. The booming growth of Aviano is expected to continue well into 2006.

"2006 should be another banner year with eight projects for a total of \$46 million and another eight projects to be awarded [contracts] for a total of \$75 million," said Colonel Polasek.

One of the new buildings Aviano members can look forward to seeing is the new indoor firing range which is expected to open in the summer as

soon as certification for range operations is obtained.

Another big project is the medical treatment facility in Area One which is also expected to open this summer.

"This is the crown jewel of the Aviano 2000 program and is the single largest project sponsored by NATO," said Colonel Polasek. "This one is a big add to the community as it will consolidate all the medical care in one location."

Upcoming Aviano 2000 projects

- **Passenger terminal** – A 32,000-square foot facility with half of its space for the terminal and half for freight.
- **Jet Engine Intermediate Maintenance** – This facility will provide complete engine repair capability and secure more than \$50 million worth of F110-100 engines. Engines will no longer need to be shipped to Germany for repairs.
- **Fire station** – This will provide space for 69 firefighters with a capability of five drive-through vehicle bays for 13 fire and rescue vehicles.

Tuskegee, from page 5

"Two things," he said. "Patriotism is the first thing. You have an obligation to do the best you can for your country, especially when your country is in trouble."

"Second, lead the way for people coming behind you. You lead the way by first getting a good education. There's nothing better than being well-educated and experienced. The basis you're forming now will be what you build on later in your life."

Colonel Archer came full circle in 2006 when he recently made two trips to Iraq where he met with the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing in Balad, formerly the 332nd Fighter Group that he served in during WWII.

"It was amazing standing in front of this group in Iraq," he said. "This is what I hoped for in 1941 – 3,000 men and women of every race and ethnicity and they were fighting as one group. All of them were doing any job and their assignment was based on their capabilities. And as far as I was concerned, it was the fulfillment of the wildest dream in the world: a perfect ending."

Air Force, Army work as joint team

By Staff Sgt. Kristina Barrett
506th Air Expeditionary Group
Public Affairs

KIRKUK AIR BASE, Iraq - Surrounded by stacks of school supplies, Senior Airman Aaron Smith stands in the middle of a mission that almost didn't go.

The supplies are donations from groups and individuals in the States and the mission is Operation Provide School Supplies. Without the Airmen of the 506th Air Expeditionary Group, the mission was in jeopardy of failing.

Airman Smith, a chaplain assistant from Columbus Air Force Base, Miss., was instrumental in reviving the program. Operation Provide School Supplies originally belonged to the U.S. Army's 116th Civil Affairs Battalion. When the unit rotated out in August, the duties transferred to the 451st Civil Affairs Battalion, who were too undermanned to support the program completely. It was then the 506th AEG Chapel stepped in to head the program.

"The program is very important because it allows the military to reach out to the people of Kirkuk," Airman Smith said. "The children in this area have nothing, let alone school supplies and we are doing our part to ensure they are given the basic tools to learn."

These basics are packets of school supplies consisting of pens, pencils, notebooks and whatever other donations the program receives. The packets are assembled by volunteers who have contacted friends and family back home for donations. Once the packets are assembled, they are given



Photo by Staff Sgt. Kristina Barrett

Staff Sgt. Elizabeth Man, deployed from the 31st Fighter Wing, sorts erasers donated to Operation Provide School Supplies, which donates supplies to children in the Kirkuk region.

to the 451st, who deliver the supplies to 24 schools in the local area.

"At first we had hardly any supplies and the ones we did have had been sitting in a warehouse getting dirty," Airman Smith said. "People started e-mailing their home stations and we had a flood of supplies."

In just the past four months, approximately 25-30 volunteers from Air Expeditionary Force rotation 7 and 8 collected more than \$1,000 of supplies and assembled approximately 7,400 packets.

Heading up the program now is Staff

Sgt. Elizabeth Man, deployed from Aviano Air Base, Italy.

"This is such a great thing that we, as Airmen, can do for this country," she said. "This is unity at its best between the Air Force, Army, friends and family back home and the people of Iraq."

It is now up to the members of AEF 9 and 10 to pick up the program and make it better.

"The 506th is interested in expanding the program to include other items, such as toys and personal hygiene items," said Lt. Col. Dave Carrell, 506th AEG vice commander, deployed from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. "This will go a long way in building the relationship between the United States and the people of Iraq."

In addition to expanding the program beyond school supplies, the colonel said the 506th will be supporting other agencies as well, such as the Air Force Office of Special Investigations and the Power and Oil Infrastructure Team.

"These organizations go out into the community every day," he explained. "This is a great opportunity for them to solidify relationships and make contact with the people they need to work with."

In addition, the colonel added, people back home want to know how they can help the troops and the people of Iraq; they can start by helping the children. "Americans have big hearts and this is their chance to show American generosity."

So as the stacks of school supplies dwindle with each packet that goes out the door, the Airmen of Kirkuk Air Base will do their part in helping Iraq and its children with American kindness.

Go Caribbean: The La Bella Vista club hosts a free Caribbean All Nighter from 10 p.m. Saturday to 4 a.m. Sunday. Call Ext. 5035 for info.

Good Conduct Medal award elimination explained

By Master Sgt.
Mitch Gettle
Air Force Print News

The Air Force Uniform Board announced Feb. 6 that the Good Conduct Medal will no longer be awarded.

The Air Force director of Airman development and sustainment recently explained the reasons behind this decision.

"The quality of our enlisted personnel today is so high, we expect good conduct from our Airmen," said Brig. Gen Robert R. Allardice. "It begged the question, 'Why do we have a Good

Conduct Medal?'"

"Having a medal for good conduct is almost to say we don't expect Airmen to do well, but if they're good we will give them a medal," he said. "It's kind of insulting in our Air Force today."

One must look at the history of why the medal was created in the 1960s. The military was using the draft and involved in the Vietnam War. The Air Force didn't have any other method to recognize Airmen. Today, the Air Force Achievement Medal recognizes outstanding Airmanship.

"When we looked at that history it was clear that the

Good Conduct Medal has outlived its usefulness," said Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Gerald R. Murray. "Today's all-volunteer force is committed to serving honorably, and good conduct is what we expect from every Airman - officer and enlisted."

"We live by our core values," Chief Murray said. "When members of our service stray from those values, they do themselves and all Airmen a disservice. When that happens, commanders have the tools they need to evaluate the situation and the individual's worthiness for continued service.

"If a commander deems their conduct does not warrant discharge, then they remain a valuable Airman to our Air Force, and we expect them to continue to serve honorably," he said.

General Allardice said that it is the uniform, not the Good Conduct Medal, that represents what Airmen are all about.

"In today's Air Force, our Airmen understand that the uniform they wear represents good conduct," he said.

Airmen who have previously earned the Good Conduct Medal are still authorized to wear it.



Carnevale 2006

**Story and photos by
Senior Airman Sarah Gregory
31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs**

With its old crumbling buildings and misty piazzas, Venice is the perfect setting for the colorful and mysterious costumes of Carnevale.

Almost everyone has heard of Carnevale, a spectacular festival where people let loose one last time before the restrictions of Lent. Held in Venice for the two weeks prior to Ash Wednesday, Carnevale is a time of extravagance in food and fun. This year, Carnevale runs through Feb. 28.

Living near Venice affords Aviano members a great opportunity to visit Venice during Carnevale without having to worry about hotel or travel reservations. Train tickets are inexpensive and can be purchased in advance online. It's a good idea to go early in the day as trains and the city can get extremely crowded.

"If you are going to Carnevale, I would recommend you give yourself a lot of time to get around and back to the train," said Staff Sgt. Michael Holzworth, 31st Communication Squadron. "It's very crowded and it can get a little confusing, but keep

an open mind and you should have fun."

Tourists from around the world flock to Venice to see the costumes and experience the revelry of Carnevale. Although the city is packed, the crowds are friendly and well-behaved. You shouldn't see drunken or rowdy groups of people – people are there to see the spectacular costumes and take in the festive atmosphere. Because of the mass of people, it's a good idea to wear your camera strap around your neck and put your wallet in a front pocket. If you're planning on carrying a purse, bring one with a long strap that can be draped across your body.

No matter what time of the day you get to Venice, there is always something to see. People dressed in elaborate costumes walk the streets and will gladly pose for pictures. These people are posing for free and are stopped by photographers frequently, so be sure to thank them.

"I liked the fact that so many people from different cultures could be celebrating without political differences being involved. It was a great example of peaceful celebration among many different cultures," Sergeant Holzworth said.

Other Carnevale events include live music, street performers, children throwing confetti and people dressed as mischievous characters playing tricks on tourists. A popular one is a group of dancers who use a pair of wooden claws to grab tourists' legs.

For a more formal Carnevale experience, people can dress

Upcoming events

- Gondola and boat parades along the Grand Canal Saturday and Monday.
- Mask parades in San Marco Square at 4 p.m. Saturday and Tuesday.
- Performance by the Opera da Camera di Venezia in San Marco Square at 4 p.m. Saturday.
- Carnevale for children in the Cannareggio district 3 p.m. Sunday.
- Fireworks on Tuesday mark the end of Carnevale.

in costume and attend one of the many dinner balls held in the palazzos along the Grand Canal. For more information on price and availability, visit www.carnivalofvenice.com.

Whether you're going just to see the costumes or to attend of the fancy masquerades, Carnevale is a celebration where anything goes and is one not to be missed.

"I would recommend everyone stationed at Aviano go to Carnevale at least once because it's a chance to see a city come alive," said Sergeant Holzworth. "I witnessed a group of people dressed as a pack of penguins squawking and waddling through one of the oldest cities in Italy. It was weird, but cool and definitely something I wouldn't have seen if I didn't go."



Above: The romantic, narrow "streets" of Venice are the perfect setting for a stroll or gondola ride with your special someone. **Left, right and top:** Partygoers dress in fancy costumes and walk around the streets posing for photos.



USAFE Idol

Aviano singers are competing for USAFE Idol at 7 p.m. Saturday in the base theater. Seating is limited and doors open at 6:30 p.m. The first place winner receives \$350 and will advance to the USAFE-level competition April 17-22 at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. For more information, call Ext. 5479 or visit www.usafesvsmarket-ing.org/idol.htm.

Ash Wednesday

A Protestant Ash Wednesday service is at noon Wednesday in the main chapel. Catholic Ash Wednesday services are at noon in the Italian chapel and at 5:30 p.m. in the base chapel. For more information, call Ext. 5211.

Marriage workshop

The 31st Fighter Wing Chapel and Family Advocacy office is offering a marital relationship enhancement class from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Tuesday and March 7. All couples are invited to the free workshop that teaches communications skills and conflict

techniques. For more information, call the base chapel at Ext. 5211 or family advocacy at Ext. 5667.

IG vacancy

The 31st Fighter Wing Inspector General's office seeks a senior non-commissioned offer to fill the superintendent vacancy. Application packages are due to the 31st FW IG office by March 3. For more information, call Ext. 5662.

FTAC position

The 31st Mission Support Squadron is looking for a motivated staff sergeant or technical sergeant to fill the NCO in-charge position at the First Term Airmen Center. Applications must be turned in to Tech. Sgt. Victoriano Rodriguez by March 17. For more information, call Ext. 5249 or Ext. 5577.

Awards dinner

The Maintenance Professional of the Year awards banquet is at 6 p.m. March 18 at Hangar One. Social hour begins at 6 p.m. and dinner at 7 p.m. Tickets cost \$25 for senior non-commissioned officers, \$20 for NCOs and \$18

for Airmen. For more information or to purchase tickets, call Senior Master Sgt. Daniel Frey at Ext. 8562.

WIC position

The Women and Children Overseas program has an administrative assistant position available in June. The position requires secretarial, office experience or education, good communication skills and a desire to work with families and children. To apply e-mail a resume and cover letter to edibiase@cmse.net or fax 0434-30-4640.

La Leche League

The La Leche League meets at 10 a.m. March 9 in the chapel education center, Area One, Bldg. 168. The group welcomes all breastfeeding and pregnant women. Babies and children are welcome at the meetings and snacks are provided. For more information call 0434 755 606 or 348 242 5373 or email LLLAviano@yahoo.com.

Yard sale

The Aviano Thrift Shop is hosting a base-wide yard sale from 8 a.m. to noon March 11 in the Aviano High School multi-purpose room. People who want to sell their items can rent a table for the yard sale. To rent a table or for more information call Ext. 5428 or 349-470-9269.

Munitions

The Munitions Storage Area (Area G) is closed through March 19 for an exercise and an inventory. During this time, only emergencies will be supported. For more information, call Ext. 8774.

Easter pageant

The Aviano Community Choir needs singers, actors, backstage hands, set builders and other volunteers for an Easter pageant April 2-3 in the base theater. Rehearsals are 3 p.m. Sundays and 7 p.m. Wednesdays at Aviano Baptist Church, at the corner of Via Mazzini and Via Nardo in Aviano. Child care is available during rehearsals and dinner is provided after Sun-

day practices. For more information, call Robin Watts at 348-520-0655 or 0434-65-2278 or Master Sgt. Carl Schlender at Ext. 8652.

Combat Education

A financial aid advisor will visit the University of Maryland College University from 9 to 10 a.m. for a seminar and from 2 to 6 p.m. March 8 for an education fair. People interested in the seminar must sign up in advance. For more information, visit the education center, call Ext. 5365 or visit www.ed.umuc.edu.

Officer PME

There are many professional military education opportunities available for officers. For information on Squadron Officer School, visit <http://sos.maxwell.af.mil/socadl/>; for Air Command and Staff College information, visit <http://www.wacsc.maxwell.af.mil/Distance%20Learning/distance-learning.htm>; for Air War College, visit <http://www.maxwell.af.mil/au/awc/awchome.htm>. For more education information, call the education center at Ext. 5330.

School registration

School registration for new kindergarten and first grade students not registered at Aviano Elementary School is from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. March 14-15 in the elementary school office. Registration packages for new students must be picked up at the elementary school before the registration dates.

School registration for all returning students in grades one through 12 is from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. March 28-29 in the Aviano Elementary School gym. Parents must sign up for school transportation with the school bus office and must reapply for free and reduced lunches with the school's officer. For more information call the following offices: Aviano Elementary School at Ext. 5616; Aviano Middle School at Ext. 5777; Aviano High School at Ext. 5877; School Bus Office at Ext. 5152; and School Officer at Ext. 5261.

Reel Times

Today, 5 p.m. - "The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" Rated PG - Four children find a magic wardrobe that transports them to the land of Narnia, which was once peaceful, but is now frozen by an evil white witch. Starring: Tilda Swinton, Georgie Henley

Today, 8 p.m. - "Grandma's Boy" Rated R - A video game tester is kicked out of his apartment and forced to live with his grandmother. Starring: Allen Covert, Peter Dante

Saturday, 7 p.m. - "The Family Stone" Rated PG-13 - During an annual family gathering, the eldest son brings his controlling, high-powered girlfriend home. Relationships start to unravel and secrets are revealed, but the family comes together through the love of one another. Starring: Dermot Mulroney, Diane Keaton

Sunday, 7 p.m. - "Grandma's Boy" Rated R

Wednesday, 7 p.m. - "The Family Stone" Rated PG-13

Thursday, 7 p.m. - "Grandma's Boy" Rated R

(Titles and times are courtesy of www.aafes.com, and are subject to change.)

Fly Bys

Carnevale

Almost every Italian city has at least one day or weekend dedicated to Carnevale celebration. Carnevale locations include **Viareggio**, located north of Pisa, which is famous for its 1920 art nouveau style architecture. Viareggio's celebration every Sunday through March 5. To make a lodging reservation, call DSN 633-7255/7221. For more information, visit <http://www.viareggio.ilcarnevale.com/viareggiocarnival.cfm>

Sacile celebrates Carnevale Saturday, **Udine** celebrates Carnevale through Tuesday and **Muggia**, near Trieste, celebrates Sunday. For more information, call Ext. 7555.

Renaissance art

Marco Palmezzano, Renaissance art is displayed from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesdays through Sundays through April 30 at the Musei in San Domenico in Forli. For more information, visit www.marcopalmezzano.it.

Unusual museum

The Climbing Boot museum illustrates the history of mountaineering boots from the 19th century and displays shoemakers tools. The museum is open from 9 a.m. to noon and 3 to 6 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays and 9 a.m. to noon and 3 to 7 p.m. Sundays in Montebelluna (Treviso). For more information, visit www.museoscarpone.it.

Watch history at the Olympics

By Senior Airman Colleen Wronek
31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Aviano members watched history in the making during the 2006 Winter Olympics in Torino, which end Sunday. For many it was an unforgettable experience.

"It was an opportunity I couldn't pass up, especially since we're so close to the Olympics. I can say I was there," said Tech. Sgt. Andrea Birkland, Air Force Office of Special Investigations.

Sergeant Birkland watched the USA versus Germany women's hockey game, the 500 meter women's speed skating semi-finals and finals and the USA versus Latvia men's hockey game. "It was pretty cool watching the women's hockey," she said. "In women's hockey there's really no checking or slamming against the glass. So to see the skill and talent of the women handling the puck was pretty cool."

Sergeant Birkland said the crowds weren't as large as she expected except for the men's hockey game.

Army Capt. Brian McCoy, B Company 5-158th Aviation Regiment, and his wife, De-



Courtesy Photo

From Left to right: Denae McCoy, Army Capt. Brian McCoy and Chad Hedrick reunite after Mr. Hedrick won an Olympic gold medal in the men's 5000 meter speed skating event. Captain McCoy and Mr. Hedrick are childhood friends.

nae, attended the Olympics Feb. 11. They cheered on childhood friend, Chad Hedrick, as he won the gold in the men's 5000 meter speed skating event.

"Our favorite moment was when our hometown competitor, Chad Hedrick won the gold. We got to say hello, congratulate him afterwards and enjoy celebrating with him," Captain McCoy said. "Ever since I was a child, I wanted to go to the Olympics. It was great that we were so close to these games and actually had the opportunity to go with such ease. The spirit of the Olympics was evident throughout Torino and it was just like I imagined it would be."

Captain McCoy said the Olympics were a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that was too good to pass up. "To watch and be part of that kind of history really makes you appreciate where we are and the kind of opportunities we have over here," he said. "Everyone was there for the same reason: to cheer for their country, to win the gold and to enjoy the games."



Courtesy Photo

Tech. Sgt. Andrea Birkland is thrilled she went to the Olympics. She couldn't pass up the opportunity to go so she could say she was there.

Tourism: For Italian tourist information, including travel tips, events and activities, visit <http://www.italiantourism.com>.



Photo by Senior Airman Sarah Gregory

Juliet's balcony where Romeo called to her is a large tourist attraction in **Verona**.

Information, Tickets and Travel

Upcoming tours from the Information, Tickets and Travel office include:

- Today through Sunday – Budapest
 - Saturday – Carnevale in Venice
 - Monday – Carnevale in Venice
 - March 4 – Guided Florence
 - March 4 – Guided Verona
 - March 11 – Guided Trieste
 - March 11 – Wine and balsamic vinegar tasting and visit to Ferrari Factory
- ITT escorts ensure the group arrives

and departs from the destination as scheduled and will do everything possible to make the trip safe and comfortable. Escorts also provide general information about the area. Please note weather conditions and dress accordingly for the trip. ITT staff also recommends wearing comfortable shoes because almost all tours involve walking.

Call Ext. 5072 or 5026 for more information.

Pool sharks vie for championship

**Story and photos
By Senior Airman
Colleen Wronek**

31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Pool sharks teamed together and played solo during the 2006 U.S. Air Forces in Europe Pool Shark Tournament in the community center.

Thirty-six single entrants and 15 teams participated in the Project Cheer-sponsored eight-ball tournament, which began the first week of February and finished up Friday.

"We had so many people sign up. It was three times bigger than expected," said Richard Totten, 31st Services Squadron recreation assistant.

Reinaldo DeJesus and Paul Mullins were the winning team after the feeding frenzy. They received \$75 each and a chance to represent Aviano at the USAFE championship March 8 through 11 in RAF Lakenheath, England.

DeJesus was also the first place winner and he received \$100. Mullins was the second place winner in the singles tournament.

"I'm really excited to go. I started playing pool as a kid, but I didn't start to take it seriously until seven years ago," DeJesus said. "Pool requires practice and discipline like in every sport. You'll enjoy the game better if your attitude is disciplined because once people get mad, they miss."

Tony Crawford and David Hart took second place in the team tournament.

"Although I wanted to go to the USAFE championship, I got lucky," Crawford said. "I've been playing pool about 20 years. You think I'd be better after all this time. I'm glad we made second."



Reinaldo DeJesus lines up a shot during the singles pool shark tournament Friday. DeJesus won the singles tournament as well as the team tournament with Paul Mullins. The team will represent Aviano during the U.S. Air Forces in Europe championship in March.



Tony Crawford breaks during the 2006 USAFE Pool Shark Tournament for singles Friday. Crawford's team took second place in the team tournament.

Fly Bys

Project Cheer

The Project Cheer Racquetball Tournament is at 9 a.m. Saturday in the Dragon Fitness Center. For more information, call Robby England at Ext. 7574.

Grifoni football

Aviano Grifoni is looking for football players. No experience is necessary. The team practices at 6:30 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays and at 1 p.m. Saturdays in Area D. For more information, e-mail avianogrifoni@yahoo.com.

Volksmarch

The Aviano Road Runners are participating in a Volksmarch at 8 a.m. Sunday. The group leaves the Bar Municipio in Roveredo and heads to Teor. For more information, call Ext. 7692 or 7404.

Volleyball

The Dragon Fitness Center is accepting applications for volleyball players to participate in the 2006 Volleyball Championships at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, March 21-24. For more information, call Ext. 7574.

Soccer tournament

The Italian Air Force command section is organizing a soccer tournament this spring. They would like to form teams of five or seven players composed of U.S. and local nationals and play on the weekends. To sign up, call Italian air force Master Sgt. Gaitano Picierro at Ext. 7038.

Fitness survey

The Area Two Fitness Center is expanding its workout area into the vacated Child Development Center building. The 31st Services Squadron needs input on what Aviano Airmen would like to see offered at the gym. For more information or to complete the survey, log onto <http://www.31svs-aviano.com/>.

Triple Nickel mission explained

By Lt. Col. Charles Moore
555th Fighter Squadron commander

Recently, the 555th Fighter Squadron and the 31st Aircraft Maintenance Unit, along with other members of the World's Finest fighter wing, returned from AEF 7/8. During its four-month deployment to Balad Air Base Iraq, the Triple Nickel conducted 24-hour flying operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

It was after one of these sorties that a Nickel crew chief asked me an interesting question: "What exactly are you guys doing up there every day?" That simple question made me realize that even though the Air Force is playing a vital role in the Global War on Terrorism, we often do a very poor job of informing others, even our own Airmen, of the role the Air Force is playing in this noble endeavor.

Although all the contributions of our service are far too numerous for me to address in this article, I do want to provide you with an example of how our Airmen here are making significant contributions to the GWOT and in our quest to help establish a democracy in Iraq.

Although the Air Force continues to perform many of its traditional missions, such as providing on-call air support when ground troops come into contact with the enemy, the emergence of new enemy tactics is forcing coalition forces to change the way they approach combat missions in Iraq. One such tactic, often employed with deadly results, is the use of improvised explosive devices to attack coalition troops and vehicles along roads and highways.

Usually buried or hidden along roadsides, IEDs were considered virtually impossible to detect from the air. In fact, successful detection of IEDs often depended on air assets actually seeing the device being planted by insurgents. Within a few days of our arrival in theater, members of the Triple Nickel, performing nontraditional intelligence-surveillance-

reconnaissance in the city of Mosul, spotted unusual heat signatures along a well-traveled highway.

NTISR involves using fighter aircraft, equipped with advanced targeting pods, to provide real-time battlefield information to commanders on the ground. The pilots were able to pinpoint and film the exact location of the suspicious spots and pass the coordinates to forces on the ground. Upon later inspection, the spots were confirmed to be buried IEDs and were successfully de-armed, undoubtedly saving coalition and civilian lives. Within days, every pilot in Iraq had been briefed on and reviewed the video of the IEDs and were flying missions armed with critical new knowledge. Before long, the Triple Nickel used this knowledge to discover over 25 buried and hidden IEDs, and they built a reputation among theater ground commanders as an invaluable asset.

To further hone this newly developed skill, a few innovative Airmen helped design and build an IED training ground within the boundaries of Balad AB. Using more than 55 actual disarmed IEDs, concealed and arrayed in every conceivable way, the training ground allowed airborne F-16s, and other coalition aircraft, to search, detect, and recognize various IED signatures from the air. Additionally, the Triple Nickel put together a DVD that compiled multiple snippets of targeting pod video showing IEDs in various environments. This video was later sent out around the Air Force to help units train for their upcoming deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan.

These are just a few of the ways Airmen are helping to win the GWOT and to defeat the insurgency in Iraq. Although the Air Force continues to support ground forces by performing traditional Air Force missions, the ingenuity, hard work and dedication of members of the 31st Fighter Wing continues to help coalition forces maintain the upper hand when it comes to mitigating new and emerging threats.



The Cornerstone

An indispensable and fundamental basis

The Cornerstone Page is devoted to those who support junior enlisted, NCOs, CGOs and spouses. It's to share advice, ideas and opinions dealing with life in the Air Force and Aviano. It's also a forum to recognize those around us. The Cornerstone Page will also offer Air Force trivia and facts.

Submission info: We want to hear from you. Flex your writing talents and share your thoughts with us and the community.

Commentaries: Writers can send commentaries to vigileer@aviano.af.mil. Commentaries must be 500 to 700 words. Topics must be applicable to the Air Force, Aviano and appeal to the general public. For questions or concerns, call the Vigileer at Ext. 7344.

Kudos: Aviano members can send congratulatory messages to Vigileer@aviano.af.mil. Messages can be submitted for appreciation, retirements, awards, good service, promotions and graduations. For questions or concerns, call the Vigileer at Ext. 7344.

Deadline: The deadline for submitting information is close of business Thursday one week prior to publication. Faxed articles will not be accepted by the staff. The public affairs office is in Bldg. 1360, Room 19.

Recognizing The World's Finest

• Kudos and thanks to all who volunteered at Phi Delta Kappa's Casino Night. Your time, energy and enthusiasm was greatly appreciated. Several thousand dollars were raised that will be given to graduating seniors going into the field of education. A good time was had by all!

— Kathy Turner, scholarship chairperson

• Congratulations to Staff Sgt. Jason Brunson, 31st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, for the outstanding completion of his Career Development Course.

• Maj. Laurie Conrad, 31st Maintenance Operations Squadron commander, proudly announces the following award winners: Senior Airman Angelo Brightwell, 2005 31st MOS Airman of the Year; Staff Sgt. Amanda Johnson, 2005 31st MOS NCO of the Year; Senior Master Sgt. Haskel Johnson, 2005 31st MOS SNCO of the Year; Ronald Duerr, 2005 31st MOS Civilian of the Year. Sergeant Johnson is also the 31st Maintenance Group NCO of the Year. We wish her the best of luck at the wing competition. Staff Sgt. Marilyn Smith won the 2005 Education and Training Manager of the Year (Junior Enlisted/Personnel Category) for USAFE. Stefania De Lorenzi is the USAFE Leo Marquez winner, Civilian Technician, Aircraft Maintenance Category. "It's been a hallmark year for the Wizards! I am so very proud to be your commander. A hearty good luck to all our winners as they compete at the next level."